

This must be the fate of many such plants, and the character of the island flora must therefore be constantly changing.

McCall's Ferry is not the place it once was in the prosperous days of the canal, when the swish of the tow-line and the expressive if not elegant language of the driver broke in upon the stillness around. The canal is but a ditch, fast filling up, and locks and banks are rapidly crumbling away. Nature does not tarry long in razing the works of man, for it is but ten years since the canal was in active operation. But its delightful surroundings; these remain, the homes of rare and interesting plants. Many of these were seen for the first time by some members of the party growing in their native haunts. Among them were several ferns, including *Asplenium Bradleyi* and *A. montanum*. It is quite a delight to see in their living freshness plants which one has known by name only or from herbarium specimens.

Many excursions were made to surrounding points, including visits to York Furnace and Tucquan Creek. It is to be hoped that these "symposia" may be held every year, and that they may all be as successful and a source of as much pleasure and delight as has this one. An opportunity was afforded this year for the active botanists of this eastern country to get together and compare notes, and it can but broaden the views of all and add much to the accumulating knowledge of the botany of the eastern states.

THE NOMENCLATURE OF HEXALECTRIS AND APLECTRUM

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The genus *Hexalectris* was proposed by Rafinesque in 1825, and republished by him in later years. It was monotypic, being based upon "*Bletia aphylla* Nutt. or *Arethusa spicata* Walt." As these two names have been identified by recent writers with plants belonging to two distinct genera, it has proved of no little interest to me to trace their history.

Walter's original description of *Arethusa spicata* is as follows :

“radice tuberosa, caule sesquipedali succulento aphylo, floribus bracteatis sessilibus alternis spicatum positus, petalis aequalibus ovatis conniventibus flavescens striis purpureis, nectario longitudine petalorum rugosa subtrilobo, lobis lateralibus brevioribus erectis, colore petalorum, lobo medio purpureo propendente, capsula columnari angulare.” While the expression “radice tuberosa” is not very happily chosen, the remainder of the description leaves no room for doubt that the plant intended was the same as that described by Nuttall thirty years later under the name *Bletia aphylla*.

This species was very little known for many years after the publication of Walter's name for it. Meanwhile Muhlenberg had transmitted to Willdenow, under the name *Cymbidium hyemale*, another orchid from the eastern United States, and Willdenow had published it. Pursh, not knowing Walter's plant, referred it to *Cymbidium hyemale*; in this way the two became confused in synonymy, and have so continued. In 1888, in accordance with the prevailing misconception, Walter's specific name was restored as the oldest one for the plant since known as *Aplectrum spicatum* (Walt.) B.S.P.

Since Pursh's time, however, at least one botanist, Elliott, has clearly distinguished the synonymy of the two species involved in this discussion. He unequivocally referred *Arethusa spicata* Walt. to *Bletia aphylla* Nutt., and further informs us (Sk. 2: 502) in a note that “this plant has always been considered by our southern botanists as the *A. spicata* of Walter.” Elliott also describes *Corallorhiza hyemalis* Nutt. (*Cymbidium hyemale* Muhl.), without any intimation that *Arethusa spicata* Walt. has anything to do with it.

The genus *Aplectrum*, and the binomial *Aplectrum hyemale*, are commonly credited to Nuttall's *Genera*, but this is a mistake. Nuttall there proposed the name *Aplectrum*, it is true, but as a subgenus only, and its only species, “*hiemalis*,” is clearly named as his third species of *Corallorhiza*. Five years later, in discussing the genus *Corallorhiza*, Nuttall * again used the name *C. hiemalis*,

* Nuttall, T. Remarks on the species *Corallorhiza*, indigenous to the United States. Jour. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 3: 135-139. O 1823.

putting the species again into the *subgenus* *Aplectrum*. Apparently the first use of *Aplectrum* as a generic name was by Torrey in 1826, although two years earlier Rafinesque had used it in the slightly altered form *Aplectra* — neither Torrey nor Rafinesque making any reference to Nuttall. The binomial "*Aplectrum hiemale* Nutt." had, indeed, been cited as a synonym by Eaton in 1822 (Man. ed. 3. 250), but it does not seem to have been adopted formally in any publication until 1826.

The synonymy of the two genera, as cleared up by the foregoing discussion, is as follows :

HEXALECTRIS Raf. Neog. 4. 1825.

Hexalectris spicata (Walt.).

Arethusa spicata Walt. Fl. Carol. 222. 1788.

Bletia aphylla Nutt. Gen. 2: 194. 1818.

Hexalectris squamosa Raf. Fl. Tell. 4: 48. 1836.

Hexalectris aphyllus Raf.; Gray, Man. ed. 6, 501. 1890.

HEXALECTRIS MEXICANA Greenm. Proc. Am. Acad. 39: 77. 1903.

APLECTRUM (Nutt.) Torr. Compend. 316, 322. 1826.

CORALLORHIZA subg. APLECTRUM Nutt. Gen. 2:

197. 1818.

APLECTRUM HYEMALE (Muhl.) Torr. Compend. 322. 1826.

Cymbidium hyemale Muhl. in Willd. Sp. Pl. 4: 107. 1805.

Corallorhiza hiemalis Nutt. Gen. 2: 198. 1818.

Aplectra clatior Raf. Cat. Bot. Gard. Transylv. 13. 1824.

Aplectrum spicatum B.S.P. Prel. Cat. N. Y. 51. 1888; not

Arethusa spicata Walt.

Aplectrum hyemale pallidum (House).

Aplectrum spicatum pallidum House, Torrey, 3: 54. 1903.

APLECTRUM SHORTII Rydb. in Britton, Man. 305. 1901.